



**For Immediate Release**

**Village of Richfield**

*Forward. Preserving...*

*A Country Way of Life!*

## **RICHFIELD RESIDENTS TO SEE DECREASE IN TAXES IN 2016**

*Village Board focuses on 'core services' to Richfield taxpayers*

**Richfield, WI...**On November 19<sup>th</sup> at 7PM the Village Board will be holding a scheduled Public Hearing to consider the adoption of the 2016 Village Budget. A budget which focuses on the Village's core services it provides its residents, saves for future capital expenditures, and most importantly, reduces the tax burden on property owners.

The Village Board will be considering a budget which puts into place a mill rate of \$1.66 per thousand dollars assessed value for properties in the Village, a cut from last year's rate of \$1.67. For the average home in the Village, valued at \$288,300, property owners will see an annual savings of \$36.00 from the Village's portion of the tax bill. Richfield's proposed mill rate is the lowest of any "village" in Washington, Waukesha, or Ozaukee County according to the published Municipal Tax Rates for 2014-15 by the non-profit, non-partisan Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance (WTA). In Washington County, only the Towns of Erin (\$1.53), Farmington (\$1.28), Polk (\$1.00), Wayne (\$1.36) and West Bend (\$1.17) have lower mill rates.

"Richfield has a long history of providing its residents with a small, responsive and fiscally responsible government. We value our 'town-like' feel while at the same time providing our residents tremendous "village-like" value for those core services we offer. Also, rather than borrowing money to fund major capital expenditures, the Village continues to save and responsibly tax property owners until such time as we are able to pay for them, in cash" said Village President John Jeffords.

The announcement of a tax cut comes on the heels of the Village being named a recipient of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) 2015 "Distinguished Budget Presentation Award". The award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting and represents the only nationally recognized awards program dedicated to excellence in municipal finance. Village Trustee Bill Collins said when commenting on Richfield's budgeting efforts; "I believe that I speak for all my colleagues on the Board when I say that we find it uniquely gratifying to not only be recognized at the State level by the League of Wisconsin Municipalities for how we handle our budgeting process in our community, but to also be recognized nationally for our efforts towards greater financial transparency by the GFOA is something that our Village residents can really feel good about".

The Village's largest expenditure in 2016 is without surprise, road construction. Proposed currently is approximately \$800,000 worth of road projects. Mile long segments of both Pleasant Hill Road and Scenic Road are scheduled for reconstruction. "With 150+ miles of road, we are not at any sort of a shortage for roads to choose from" said Trustee Sandy Voss. "Having recently just updated the Village's PASER Road Ratings in 2015 and utilizing the Staff collected traffic counts from this summer long, it will be interesting to hear the recommendations which come from the Capital Improvement Plan Subcommittee over the winter months for future road construction considerations. Roads are a continued priority."

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According to the WTA, in its recently distributed annual booklet, "Municipal Facts" some of the peer-reviewed statistics worth highlighting from this publication as it relates to Richfield are the following:

#### **Operating Spending**

"Per capital spending was highest in two tourist communities, Lake Delton (\$4,565) and Wisconsin Dells (\$2,658). Net operating spending also topped \$1,400 per person in West Milwaukee (\$1,605), Elm Grove (\$1,445), Kohler (\$1,441), and Washburn (\$1,447). Two municipalities spent less than \$250 per capital, Howards Grove (\$240) and Richfield (\$219)." – *Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, Municipal Facts, 2015*

#### **Basic Spending in Four Core Areas**

"Net basic spending per resident rebounded from its decline in 2012, increasing 1.6% from \$522 to its 2011 level of \$565 per capital. Three municipalities spent more than \$1,000 per capital on basic services. Lake Delton (\$1,682) and Wisconsin Dells (\$1,223) both have large police expenditures due to an influx of tourists, especially during the summer. Two municipalities spending less than \$200 per capital were, again, Richfield (\$179) and Howards Grove (\$164)." – *Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, Municipal Facts, 2015*

#### **Fire and Ambulance**

"Many small municipalities keep costs low by purchasing services from neighboring communities or by relying on volunteers." Median spending per person was \$76 net for the communities studied in the State of Wisconsin and \$43.08 for the Village of Richfield according to Municipal Facts.

#### **Other Facts**

- 20 municipalities were surveyed with populations between 10,000 and 12,500, the Village of Richfield has the lowest Municipal Property Tax Levy per Capita at \$217.31 per resident.
- 20 municipalities were surveyed with populations between 10,000 and 12,500, the Village of Richfield has the lowest Property Tax Rate last year at \$1.67/thousand assessed value. The next closest rate was Sumico at a rate of \$4.43.

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